

PS 3545

.I725

E7

1908

Copy 1

THE ETUDES

OF LIFE BY

Edith Lynwood Winn





Class PS 3545

Book I 725 E 7

Copyright N^o 1908

COPYRIGHT DEPOSIT.

The Etudes of Life

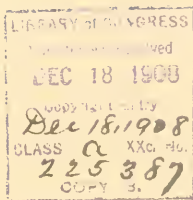
BY
EDITH LYNWOOD WINN

CIT.



1908
CARL FISCHER
PUBLISHER

PG 3545
I725 E7
1908



COPYRIGHT, 1908,
BY
CARL FISCHER

Stanbope Press
F. H. GILSON COMPANY
BOSTON, U.S.A.

U. 74. 3072. 34

To the Memory
of
Edward MacDonell

Contents



	Page
I. The Idealist	9
II. The Song Cycle	17
III. The Song of Ravana	23
IV. The Perfected Bow	29
V. The Crucible of Art	43
VI. To My Valentine	53
VII. Astrid	63
VIII. The Cry of the Ungifted	75
IX. The Old 'Cellist's Prayer	81
X. Soul Technic	89
XI. Auf Wiedersehen	99

The Idealist's monument is usually to be found on some hilltop where, exhausted, he falls by the wayside, too weak to do more than point out the way. And some hero worshipper passes by and marks the spot just as we mark the stars at night, as we dream and climb.

The Idealist



E loved Art in Nature and Nature in Art. His symbols were drawn from wood and field and fen, from every winged creature and from the deep recesses of the sea. His heart was in tune with every note of suffering in the great throbbing metropolis, yet he looked toward the hills, with their wide stretches of green and red and gold that filled his summers with delight and fed his spirit until it became surcharged with exquisite harmonies. Sometimes he nourished these children of his fancy for months, not daring to trust them to another, or to reproduce them in tone, but a loving companion, hearing their first expression, in her zeal and perfect understanding, led him to clothe them in new harmonies, and send them on their mission into the great world of Art.

There were days when, in his desire for more perfect forms of expression, he almost lost courage and, though surrounded by things beautiful, his hand refused to work, so weary was his soul with the striving after an ideal; again his companion cheered and comforted him, believing in the ultimate triumph of his genius. There were other days when he sat silent at his work among the trees that he loved — sat buried in deep thought beside the instrument which was the expression of his thoughts and ideals.

Etudes of Life

At length, when this mood had spent itself, hearing sweet voices in the evening's stillness, or viewing from afar a loved form in a garden of old-fashioned flowers, he awoke to newness of life, girded himself with the armor of faith, and long into the night he worked, glorying in the wealth of his creative instinct and the nobility of his themes.

It was with him as with all geniuses, the best came to him after a period of despair and, for the rest, mere love of praise or a passing desire for affluence never warped his soul or marred his manhood, though he had vagrant moods.

When well-earned appreciation came to him from other lands, he bowed his head and thanked God that at last they were beginning to love and honor his work, and he hastened again among the trees, for there in the soft stillness, with the crooning of the pines and the sweet notes of birds about him, his soul was filled with ecstasy. A wild rose, a water lily, a bit of heather, seemed to speak to him of God and His handiwork. He did not pray as many other men pray. He simply wrote down impressions, and these bore their own stamp of spirituality.

But these treasure days of summer could not last, though Love would fain have shielded him from the rough world and created for him an ideal atmosphere where he could work and sing with a happy heart. There came urgent calls from the great Hall of Fame, and seekers after Knowledge wrote to him from near and far, begging him to touch their art-life at some vital point. He yielded, and though his ministry was marked by lofty ideals and generous service, the soul within him was often crushed to earth, so hard was it to keep others abreast of his

The Idealist

creed. At last, when he had made one fearful plunge into the vortex of Ambition, for the sake of this creed, the light which had sustained him failed; the rock upon which he stood crumbled as if struck by the iron heel of Commercialism, bearing its material essence like a millstone about its neck — a tragedy for which he was in no way responsible, since Idealism is incompatible with all that bears the stamp of mere commodity.

His friends came to see him and beheld him a child, prattling in his joy. The soul, — that gallant soul that had withstood the shocks of years of service for Art, and sailed fearlessly into the open sea of Idealism, had gone — gone they knew not whither. When they took him by the hand and wished him God-speed, they trembled, and great marks of agony were upon their faces, for they loved him deeply. Had they always shielded him, encouraged him, helped him over the hard places of Life? They asked themselves this question as, with bared heads, they went out joyless into the joyous day.

Months passed. The world awoke to the tragedy of the disintegration of the Idealist's genius, pitied his loved companion, who alone kept the embers warm within the citadel of his mind, but God, the God of Love and Art and Life itself, stood near and sheltered him, even made him as a little child, giving him the long-lost joys and memories of youth, transporting him again to that wondrous realm of fancy in which, long ago, he had so lovingly lived and moved. In his face dwelt purity, serenity, gentleness and innocence. Then they clothed him in pure white that the vision of childhood might be

Etudes of Life

complete. One by one the last fleeting signs of mentality went out, but he was not left in darkness. A hand, warm, tender, strong; a voice, gentle, loving and sweet, soothed him, comforted his waiting days, and linked him with the great Beyond into which his spirit had entered long before his mortal body sank to rest.

In the meantime, the world was carrying his tragedy close to its great heart, — that art-world in which he had been so long a prominent figure; and other Idealists sprang to the front, striving to carry on his work and perpetuate his lofty ideals. It seemed as if a mighty wave of sympathy was wafted to him from all over the earth. His companion heard it and it made the path easier for her; he, however, played on and on in his childish glee, revelling in a bar of sunshine on the carpet, even as he had once revelled in the working out of some theme of a beautiful symphony.



One day in midwinter, when the snow lay white and soft on the door stones of his summer retreat, he sank to rest quietly, peacefully and sweetly. The city traffic and bustle was all about him, but he had journeyed to his long Home by the way of his little nook in the trees, where his last days of perfect peace and open mentality had been spent. Loving hands prepared him for burial, and many were the tokens of respect and generous sympathy which came to his loved companion from all parts of his native land. She smiled upon the still face in which there was now no sign of life, for she had become so

The Idealist

accustomed to soothing, protecting, and bearing good news to him, that for a moment she felt that she must convey in her smile all these last tokens of fealty, friendship and love from his dear Art-world. His face, still, immobile, calm, reflected her smile, when, after a long journey, they reached his summer retreat and bore him to a loved spot near which he had once worked so joyously.

There were no flowers in the garden, no song birds in the trees, no murmur of bees among the sweet scented clover. The day was cold, bitterly cold, and the leafless trees cast sepulchral shadows on the snowy counterpane 'neath which he must rest. They had made a flowered nest for him, and there was sunshine in the hearts of his followers, though they wept, for each one had pledged to his name un-failing loyalty for the years to come, and devotion to his ideals.

Life to his companion now meant double service. Heaven had become tangible to her — a link forever with that God to whom the immutable changes of centuries are but as yesterdays, and whose love is as tender as universal Motherhood. Through a rift in the clouds He seemed to cast one swift benediction on the scene, then a dull gray pallor settled slowly upon the Earth. The snowy counterpane grew deeper until it entirely covered the flowers that crowned the burial place.

Again the Idealist was clad in white, as in childhood.



Life throbbed and pulsed in its old way in the city in which he had lived and worked. Men spoke

Etudes of Life

his name tenderly and lovingly. Great orchestras sought to carry out the spirit of his works in many a Hall of Fame, and plain, careworn men pored over what he had created, and prayed that one day they might take up the thread of his art-life.

One would fain have sat apart for a time — his companion — but she felt that his ideals must be carried out, and again she took up her task lovingly and fearlessly.

Time passed and there came to her the story of the death of a great Slav, another Idealist. She asked if he, too, had suffered in the attaining of his art-ideals. When they told her his tragedy, she said, "The Idealist's monument is usually found on some hilltop where, exhausted, he falls by the wayside, too weak to do more than point out the way. And some hero worshipper passes by and marks the spot just as we mark the stars at night, as we dream and climb."

The Song-Cycle

The Song-Cycle



HERE was once a man who had an inordinate thirst for Knowledge from the days of his boyhood; his teachers, seeing his zeal, overfed him and sapped all the warm red corpuscles of his physical life to thrust him into the arena before he had reached his prime. And he did win in the race, for when, pale and worn, he stood before the greatest artist of our time and played the last movement of that great man's Concerto with surprising technical dexterity and brilliancy, the master was filled with wonder.

But there was something about this seeker after Knowledge which seemed to hold him back — to estrange him from his fellows, as it were, and yet neither he nor they knew the cause. Feverish and impatient, he worked from day to day, hearing neither the glad voices of children in the streets nor the importunities of the aged and helpless as they asked alms at his door.

One day, after his fame as a virtuoso had been fully established, and when, restless for wider renown, his thirst for Knowledge was almost satiated, he bethought himself of a Song-Cycle which he had once written and set aside, that he might make some portion of it more beautiful in the years to come. And so he sent it to a publisher and waited for a favorable answer, believing in his own heart that the

Etudes of Life

public would welcome it as a beautiful work. But the publisher was a man of unusual discernment, as well as of deep knowledge of life, and he felt that beautiful as the Song-Cycle appeared, it had no soul. He was a large-hearted man, however, and even at the risk of giving offense to the composer, he wrote to him and begged him to rewrite the work, saying, "The beauty of a song lies not in its text nor its music alone. There is a subtle something behind it all, a motif pure and sweet, that binds man to man and fills the great gaps in life made by sin and suffering. It is this human element that is lacking in your Song-Cycle. May it not be that great as has been your training, and profound as is your knowledge, you have not touched souls with the Universe? All knowledge has but one object, and that is to raise man and the works of man above the commonplace, and to infuse new life into humanity. To feel the needs of the Universe you must not shrink from the touch of the fishmonger. He has built his habitation, stored it with food, clothed his wife and children. He loves LIFE; you love KNOWLEDGE. Who shall say that he is not as worthy a citizen as you? Yet most men say that Art maketh the world richer because it is attached to a star. Give to your Song-Cycle some new and vital impulse. Have you not heard the cry of a little motherless child? Or have you not seen the renunciation of Art for one perfect year of a woman's love? Or have you not known a man who waited a life-time and served a few people because they needed him so? You know, perhaps, that his reward came to him in the fullness and ripeness of his powers, but he chose to stand aside and let other men reap their reward first, because he knew

The Song=Cycle

in his heart that true humility meant infinite patience and loving service. The heart becomes self-centered when there is no more generous motive in life than the storing up of Knowledge. Power comes through throbbing impulse rather than through repose; through human love rather than through intellectual ascendancy; through self-effacement in the pursuit of a Great Ideal. Live and you will write. Serve and you will learn to love. Sing your own Song to the multitude before you ask that one note of it be written upon the lined page whose records, like human deeds, can never be recalled."

The Song of Ravana

The Song of Ravana

(AN EASTER TALE)



UT of his palace in the East came King Ravana, playing, as he walked, his instrument of sycamore wood.

The tones of the ravanastron soothed the listening ear, even as the faint sweet essence of spices lulled the tired traveller to sleep in

the green gardens of Ceylon.

The King was a mystic, an idealist, a prophet of things to come in the great world of Art. Men neither jeered nor reviled him, parrying his gestures and words with rude blows and coarse jests, for the world about him was reverent, feeling in his work the first expression of a far-away ideal. Though he made only melody, men were satisfied, for the beautiful relations of tones had neither maddened nor intoxicated them with significance, nor had Genius yet been crushed under the iron heel of Materialism.

It was a calm, still evening. The King entered his garden erect, his dark eyes flashing fire, his nostrils distended, his huge breast heaving with sudden emotion, for before him there suddenly passed a wonderful vision, a pageant in tone, — and he heard for the first time the word Beethoven.

Those about him saw the strings of the ravanastron quiver almost to snapping in their terrible tension, and from afar came strange harmonies, ever

increasing in their power and beauty, until the crude bow of the King was as a wand of hair.

At length, into the garden came a young man bearing upon his forehead the stamp of the high calling of God. Kneeling at the feet of Ravana, he held up to view two beautiful pieces of wood and a precious vial, whose contents changed color before the gaze like the chameleon, save that vivid reds and browns and amber predominated. King Ravana kissed the forehead of the youth, as with upraised hand he blest him, and behold! the whole world awoke to newness of life in that touch of Fatherhood. The trees of the garden suddenly became as a sea of fire, and all creeping things shrank back into hidden recesses, so bright was the face of the Sun.

"To Thee, Oh Youth," cried the King, raising the weary traveller from the ground, "I commit my trust. Feeble and imperfect as is this thing of wood that I created, it has a living Soul, a perennial Spirit that shall not die. Thou wilt perfect it. Thou alone canst ennoble it. It shall bring together the Nations of the Earth, perfecting them in unbroken Harmony. Take it, Oh my Son, for it is thy Heritage, thy golden Opportunity."

The youth smiled, but at the first faint tones of the ravanastron, a wave of bitter disappointment took possession of him. He had travelled far and suffered pitifully, striving in the Desert of Waiting to conserve his energies and perfect his ideals. Pained, crushed, discouraged, he impulsively struck upon the strings, smiting them like a living thing, till they snapped in twain; then he dashed the ravanastron upon the ground and there it lay, bruised and spent, among the upturned faces of the flowers.

The Song of Ravana

He turned away to hide his grief and disappointment, nor did he look upon the face of Ravana, the mystic, the prophet, the seer, smiling sadly upon him as he passed unattended into the gathering darkness.



Centuries passed, and lo! on the walls of a humble workshop in Cremona, one Easter day, there flashed forth a strange legend. None saw it but a white-haired old man who, holding a perfected instrument in his loving hands, seemed to touch the soul of Ravana across the abyss of Time.

In that hour, Antonio Stradivari at last knew himself to be the Chosen One, and pressing his violin close to his heart, he walked forth into the sunshine to catch the first morning smile of God.

There is no Art without Love
and no Love without God.

God — Love — Art!

These three are the links in the
chain of the
Perfected Life.

And the Violin — It is the
House Beautiful
where dwells my
Twin-Soul.

The Perfected Bow

(JEAN LA GARDE)

I



ST. XAVER, known to the world as a historic Canadian town which has long since lost its old-time maritime prosperity, when wooden ships sailed proudly out to sea, bringing back in a twelfth month their rich exchange from the Old World, enjoys two distinctions: It has become a popular summer resort even in the face of constant and unremitting opposition on the part of its citizens, and it has been honored by the presence and residence of a virtuoso, of whom, for years, the most eager could find out nothing, and concerning whom there was much speculation. His name was Jean la Garde and, inasmuch as his possessions, inherited from a relative in Montreal, enabled him to live in peace and quiet at St. Xavier, disbursing money to the needy and solace to the afflicted, no one bore him ill-will or pried into his life.

Jean la Garde was long past fifty, prematurely old, with lines of care upon his face and a strange reticence in his manner that bespoke the sensitiveness of the dreamer and artist.

In his little house beside the glittering, shifting Bay that took to its bosom the fair St. Croix and cast it

far to Fundy's shores, Jean la Garde played the violin from morn till night, except in those brief intervals when he went to town to buy his provisions and linger awhile at eventide with his "garçon," as he called him, the village barber, whose violinistic zeal made the heart of Jean glad, save when a village dance marred the smooth beauty of his tone and rendered him insensible to the perfect beauty of old Porpora and Corelli and Tartini for a time.

Poor Pierre! How he had struggled with Baillot, Rode, Viotti and all the rest! Even when Jean was most sanguine, he often failed utterly for want of the stimulus of the outer world, the great world of action, tragedy and event; and alas! he tipped the black bottle until his arm became too unsteady for even the Witches' Dance, or a rollicking hornpipe.

Jean was patient, kindly, sincere. Besides, he was evidently an aristocrat. Pierre was bourgeois in everything but his love for his violin and his master. He had also that infinite capacity for hero worship which exalts any man, whatever his station.

Jean la Garde, in turn, loved Pierre like a son, for the fountain springs of the artist's life run deep and, vitiated though they often are, they are fed from a perennial spring.

"*Mon pere!*" "*Mon pere!*" It was the voice of Pierre at the door of the old block house where lived the virtuoso.

"I have good news. Thou hast another pupil — a young lady, already a virtuoso. She came to my mother for a room and sup last night. She shuns the hotels. It is not quiet there, and so many people. And now, my friend, thou hast at last a pupil after thine own heart. She has travelled much, played in

The Perfected Bow

great cities, and would rest here in our beautiful village, to get strong in our good air. *Mon Dieu!* she has thy tone but not thy soul. Thou shalt see. I will bring her."

With that the enthusiastic Pierre was out of the house before Jean la Garde could utter a word. He stood at his door, stunned, fearful, trembling. Then he looked about him. The room was small, clean, artistic, yet plainly furnished. A few good pictures adorned the walls. An ancient viola da gamba lay silent upon an old mahogany table in the corner. There were manuscripts all around that day, for he had been arranging a wonderful old minuet by Porpora and a sonata by Locatelli, for piano and violin, from the figured bass, and he was eager to finish his work. Pierre had said he would bring the girl. Who might she be? He dared not question her, he who had been so long an outcast from the art-world. She might be some link with the Past. She might have lived in Paris — and have heard — God! he could not bear to lose the respect of these villagers, of Pierre, — it was all he had left, save the comfort of his violin.

As he stood hesitating and fearful, great beads of perspiration coursed down his face. He clutched at the open door. A faintness was upon him and he saw not.

"*Mon pere! Mon pere!* She is here — the young lady, the virtuoso, as you call it; she comes from Paris, from Berlin, from New York — everywhere she has played, but not to you, *mon pere*, not to you, who are the greatest!"

Pierre was panting with excitement as he came up the steps, followed by his guest.

A girl in years, with a woman's face and vision,

stepped over the narrow threshold and greeted Jean la Garde. Her glossy hair was braided in two long, smooth braids around her head. Her forehead was low and wide, and under her dark eyebrows Jean la Garde saw her wondrous deep blue eyes, blue as the sea, as tender as those of a young mother yet as innocent as a child's; and he started, awoke, and saw the Past from which he was ever trying to shrink.

The face of his guest was the most beautiful he had ever looked upon in its perfect contour. Small as she was, she seemed to carry the impression of nobility, of stature, of strength; his mind went back to the grand salons and the women who had petted and praised him for his genius, and there stopped, for there was a vision above them all, better, purer, nobler.

The girl put out her hand appealingly. He did not take it. He only stood there with wide dilated eyes. Once he tried to speak, but the words would not come.

It was Pierre who at last broke the silence, — Pierre, confused, disappointed, uneasily shifting from one foot to the other.

"*Mon pere*," he said softly, "the little lady would hear the great violin."

Jean la Garde stepped to the door of his tiny bedroom, opened it, hesitated a moment and passed in, leaving the door ajar.

"He will play," whispered Pierre, "wait."

They sat down in the quaint old mahogany chairs, standing like straight-backed thoroughbreds against the white walls.

Jean la Garde had taken his violin out of its case, and soft tones were already issuing from it, as if impelled by a reluctant bow. It was only for a moment. Just as a ray of sunlight darts out of a rift in a cloud,

The Perfected Bow

warm, tender, joyous and far-reaching, the violin awoke to life, and Jean la Garde was himself as of old.

Strange scenes passed before his vision, strange only in point of distance from the present; throbbing life was before him, and the plaudits of the world for which he had once sacrificed all, intoxicated him, feeding his ambition, whetting his appetite for virtuosity, maddening him as of yore.

The girl listened, but not eagerly. She had heard the greatest. This was indeed virtuosity. The tone was beautiful, but it sounded no new depths in her soul. Suddenly Pierre touched her elbow.

"Wait," he said softly; looking at the Crucifix in the far corner of the room, he crossed himself.

From the next room came that famous old Adagio by Corelli. It seemed as if there were four violins playing, each one vying with the others in beauty of tone and perfect intonation.

"He will play Tartini now," whispered Pierre, as the last tones of the Corelli died away in a cadence of exquisite beauty. "It is ever so."

As the noble theme of the G Minor Sonata fell upon her ears, the girl started, awoke, almost crying out in her joy. Her mother had played that air into her very soul in childhood, played it until it had almost driven her to madness, and then she had kissed a picture in a locket that she wore close to her heart. The girl had never asked a question then, but when, as the years passed and she, too, played the work, she learned that it was based upon the old story of the desertion of Queen Dido by Æneas at Carthage, she began to ask herself if perhaps her mother too had been deserted. But she put the idea out of her mind. Her mother had

said once — only once, — “ He who taught me this Sonata loved me — he was not to blame. It was the violin and the bow that did all the mischief.”

As Jean la Garde finished those noble chords that precede the joyous optimism of the finale, a string snapped. Pierre uttered a groan of disappointment.

“ He will play no more,” he said discontentedly.

“ So it ended for me,” they heard the player say to himself.

In the outer room he took them by the hand, simply saying, “ You will come another day. I will play the other Tartini.”

Pierre kissed his hand. The girl looked into the face of the great artist earnestly, almost pleadingly. She had begun to feel the spell of his art. As they turned to go Jean la Garde suddenly leaned against the door for support. He seemed about to fall.

“ *Mon Dieu*, the great violin!” cried Pierre, springing to his side. “ What if it had fallen!”

“ It might be better so,” answered Jean la Garde, as he touched the hand of his friend, for there were times when his soul cried out so for human sympathy, that he was almost mad. When the sea failed and the violin, there was Pierre, the bourgeois, the plodder, the artisan, with his great heart. The grasp of his hand and the sound of his voice were as manna to this man, who carried the tragedy of his life like a mill-stone about his neck, saving him from himself — that nether self, ruined, desolate, forgotten by friends, lost to the world of Art, lost almost to God — save that in his manhood there still lurked some strange instinct that led him nightly to the Crucifix.

The Perfected Bow

II

Nearly a month had passed. Every day Mlle. Marie, as the villagers had begun to call her, came to the house of Jean la Garde for instruction. He would have it so, and she, eager, joyous, discerning, saw that growth in her art-life meant spiritual awakening for the silent man in the block house. They played the Spohr Duets to Pierre and he listened gravely, but his heart was for Paganini, so in a vagrant mood, his teacher would close with the Witches' Dance or one of the Caprices. There were days and days when Nardini, Corelli, Veracini and Locatelli reigned. Mlle. Marie listened eagerly, for, in the traditional rendering of these works, she felt the spirit of one who, of his school, may have been the greatest, — old Viotti, from whose followers Jean la Garde had received instruction. She dared not play the moderns to him, for he lived in that classic world made precious to him by long silence and deep meditation.

One day she brought him the Tschaikowsky Concerto. Though he had never heard it, he played like a master till he came to the second movement — the Canzonetta. Then he looked puzzled and asked her to play the piano part. They played it over and over, he seeming never to tire of it. At last he placed his violin in its case and said hoarsely,

“This man must have suffered more than any man in the world save one perhaps — ”

There was a long silence. Then the girl placed her hand on his arm, with a rare sweet gesture born of discerning womanhood and deepest sympathy.

“We suffer,” said she, “that we may have some-

thing more to give to the world about us. Not as we live do we play, but as the divine in us would have us to live. All that we have done in the past is forgotten, atoned for, forgiven by the dear God above. I care not to be great, as the world calls greatness. I would rather be a blameless artisan like Pierre, than sound one note that does not express a lofty ideal; and yet — and yet — I am not ready, not strong enough nor noble enough yet for the mission — I wish to help people to live better through my art. You must help me, my teacher, you are so much greater than I."

The man shrank back as if stung.

"Child!" he cried passionately, "you cannot know what it means to have sacrificed all that is worthy and beautiful in life to cold relentless Ambition. Go — go — I may say what I would not. Jean la Garde is an outcast, and his art, crying out from that Strad, leaping from the hair of that Tourte bow, is but the wreck of a life — the bitter mockery of God's judgment!"

The girl looked toward the overhanging Crucifix and laid her hand in his. She was not afraid.

"Jean la Garde," she said softly, "God's love can heal. God's mercy never fails. Life is not all lost to you. You have awakened my soul to love and serve Art better. The God in you is not dead!"

She was gone. Jean la Garde knelt before the Crucifix. When, at last, he arose, he had begun life anew.

The Perfected Bow

III

That night there fell upon the coast of New Brunswick one of those terrific and cruel storms that are the terror of the mariner. Jean la Garde had always loved such nights. He revelled in them, sometimes playing to their wild inspiration until long into the night. Somehow they had seemed to free his spirit. To-night he played as he seldom played, wild improvisations, surging with the memory of his past life, bare, helpless, yet defiant.

There was a knock at the door. A hooded figure stepped upon the worn threshold, but the man heard not. Suddenly there was a sound, long, booming, ominous, from across the Bay. Had any soul dared to leave the harbor in that awful night? Jean la Garde stepped to the door. There was one long note of distress followed by another and another.

Mlle. Marie touched his arm.

"Jean la Garde," she cried, hoarsely, "it is the steamer from St. John. Pierre and the Mayor are on board. They are six hours late. The wharves are full of our good people, but no one dares go out in such a night."

Again there sounded that ominous note across the Bay. It seemed closer — nearer to the sand-bar that stretched sinister and treacherous out into the mouth of the St. Croix.

"Play, Jean la Garde," she cried, "for God's sake, play! I will pray for all His creatures who are in peril, — Pierre, thy friend, and the good mayor, and many others that are out upon the sea in this awful night. There are beacon lights everywhere. All the

Etudes of Life

town is awake. Play, Jean la Garde, we can do nothing there!"

Hours passed. Jean la Garde sent up his prayer to God, and God heard it. He played as never before. The girl knelt long before the Crucifix. Ere the morning light broke upon St. Xaver, Pierre and the good Mayor, storm-spent but alive, were safe in their beds. The beacon lights had not failed.

Into the heart of Jean la Garde had come a strange yet perfect peace. He had told Mlle. Marie the story of his life, and he had learned from her lips and from the locket that she wore at her neck that she was indeed the child of that other Marie whom for fame he had long ago abandoned. To his crushed and bleeding spirit it was like a heavenly message to hear that she never had reproached him though she never spoke his name, even on her deathbed. One thing only had Mlle. Marie asked him sternly, "Did my mother ever have a wedding ring?"

"We were married," said he, "at Bordeaux. I pawned the ring at Monte Carlo. That was when the curse began."

In the gray morning light the two sat hand in hand before the Crucifix. Neither spoke. All wounds were healed. Both were thinking of the great work before them, the work of love and service,—the only expiation for the Past. Pierre found them thus a little later, and they told him all.

The Perfected Bow

IV

It was a beautiful day in early September, cool, vigorous, and prophetic of that early Autumn which creeps upon us unawares at St. Xaver. The green and dank old wharves seemed to have taken on a holiday appearance. The streets of the quiet old town were alive with curiosity-stricken citizens and visitors, the last of the summer colony.

That morning the old block house was closed and barred. Jean la Garde and Mlle. Marie had told the villagers that they were father and daughter — that was all. The remainder of the story lay safe with Pierre. They were going out into the great world again to warm and comfort and bless it through Art. The sorrows of their lives had deepened their potentiality. Good-will and loving words followed them out of the harbor and into the unknown future.

From time to time there came news to St. Xaver of them, stories that Pierre, in his simple faith and loving remembrance, treasured like household Penates. Mlle. Marie was playing upon the famous Strad, with the still more famous Tourte bow; the soul of the violin and the soul of Jean la Garde were shriven, consecrated, perfected. Wherever they went — the girl, the man and the violin, there came perfect peace to all who listened; and when at rare intervals they played together, people bowed their heads and wept.

Thus do men expiate the errors of their youth, looking into the clear depths of a woman's soul for a reflection of the Christ.

The Crucible of Art

The Crucible of Art



HE was a petite, fragile-looking creature with great brown eyes that dreamed and dreamed until the Professor had to rap on her violin sharply with his bow, to bring her back to this mundane sphere long enough to play her Rode Caprices intelligently. The other students smiled, for the "Amerikanerin," with her little shoes, her wonderful golden hair and her flashes of strange melancholy, relieved by an occasional brilliant and vivacious rendering of the Faust Fantasie, in which the Professor took great delight, was a puzzle and a curiosity to them. Herr Nussbaum stroked his feeble, tow-colored moustache, too short to curl at the ends in the Kaiserlich fashion, and wondered why his own masterly rendition of the Faust failed to elicit applause and awaken enthusiasm. Fräulein Wittig pursed her rosy lips, stuck both fat hands on her spacious hips, and sighed. Sometimes she even went so far as to yawn when the "Amerikanerin" played, but these occasions were rare, for the Professor had keen eyes, and he disliked jealousy of any kind.

But there was a new element, — a strange new atmosphere of comradeship in the Studio, which the class could not understand. The "Amerikanerin" had resented a sarcastic remark made by the Professor, and had actually espoused the cause of another girl with vehemence, accusing him openly of being unjust

and capricious. The German boys and girls sat fairly trembling with excitement as the colloquy progressed, not daring to raise their eyes from the floor, — for had he not called them “Dummkopf” and many other vituperous epithets these many years? And yet, when not irritated, he was so kind and generous! One could hardly believe that an American girl with little talent, no pedigree and no dowry, could actually break down the barriers of form, and presume to criticise a distinguished artist.

When all the other students had departed, the girl waited, for she knew she had hurt him.

“I did not mean to be discourteous,” she said simply; then, like a lightning flash, her whole attitude changed. Her breath came quickly, her hands clenched behind her back and her voice trembled.

“I cannot play to you any more,” she passionately exclaimed, “I cannot play even if the other students are absent. I don’t know why. It is a something that seems to stifle all the musical expression in my soul. I am going to give up my lessons.”

The man’s face changed. Deep lines of sorrow came into it, and his lips trembled under his moustache, but he did not speak. Once he coughed slightly, as he fumbled among some sheets of music; then, without word or warning, he turned and left the room.

The girl waited — waited for half an hour, but he did not return. At length she went to his desk and wrote: “No one has ever believed in me as you have. It meant so much to me. Forgive me if I seemed disrespectful. I am only an American girl — crude at best — and, you see, I didn’t know —”

Here the letter ceased. She did not even sign her name, hardly realizing that her informal manner of

The Crucible of Art

expression was still more of a breach of etiquette, and then, softly closing the door, she passed out into the street just as the lights were beginning to shed a soft glow over the glistening snow of the December night.

A lazy cabman passed by, his brr-r-r sounding in her ears like a faint buzzing sound. Her senses were benumbed, her whole frame quivering with pain. She had come to Berlin alone, unfriended, unwarned, innocent, sanguine because wholly ignorant of the great world of Art and the long weary route by which, at last, one gains recognition and distinction.

The first few months had almost killed her, so great was her loneliness and disappointment. She had, like many another American girl, learned just where she stood in relation to Art and, as the days passed and her own crudities became more and more apparent to her, her very soul shrank back and her spirits sank. Poor child! She was tasting the first bitter experience of life and study abroad, and in that great city of Berlin, she had not one friend to whom she could go for comfort. Not one, did I say? Yes, there was one. The Professor had understood the longing and the pain. He had put his hand on her golden head and begged her to take courage. He had believed in her — yes, he had even taken the trouble to hunt her up and to tell her, with all his fine delicacy and manliness, why she must put herself under the protection of some honest American or German woman, while pursuing her studies in the great Capital. He had secured a place for her in Frau Kessler's Pension, and, when she had confessed how little money she had for her expenses and her study, he had written a long letter to her Uncle who, of all her family, believed in her future. Yes, he

it was who, with a nature none too calm and nerves none too controlled, had given her the very best that was in him, striving to work out in her his own ideals of Art. He could make his pupils suffer sometimes, and he did, but never once had he been unkind to her or belittled her in the presence of the other members of his class.

And now she had hurt him — perhaps lost him by her ill-advised remarks. She fairly tottered as she reached the Pension on Potsdamer Strasse, at the door of which stood Johann Kessler. He had just lighted his cigar and seemed somewhat surprised to see her.

“ Out late again? ” he said reproachfully.

“ Don’t speak to me, Johann! ” cried the girl, with a quivering voice, “ I have offended the Professor. I am just ill over it and so discouraged! ”

Johann threw away his cigar in sheer surprise and alarm. He was the Professor’s pupil, and a “ star pupil ” too. How could he endure the thought of not being admitted into a secret! His pronounced German curiosity was not proof against the temptation to excuse himself from an evening at Frau von Borge’s, across the street, although he knew that the young von Borge girls would be fascinating and the beer of the best. Was not the “ Amerikanerin ” under his mother’s protection? And was she not in his quartet class? The Professor favored her, too, and who would not espouse the cause of a favorite? Johann thrust his hand through his tawny hair till it stood straight and bristling, then he put his violin carefully in a corner, and having offered his colleague the most comfortable chair in the big parlor, stammered out:

“ The Professor! The Professor! How could you

The Crucible of Art

provoke him, Fräulein, he so kind and good a man and so much your friend!"

The young man had evidently forgotten a recent vituperous epithet which the Professor had bestowed upon him when he had played the Devil's Trill Sonata in a very unsatisfactory manner, but German boys never mind wordy castigations.

The girl sat silently weeping in the big old-fashioned chair in the corner. Friendless, crushed, totally unstrung by the events of the afternoon, Johann's rough boyish sympathy seemed to appeal to her. To-morrow he might again annoy her by his steady stare at the dinner table, and his ill-expressed compliments might lead her to again poke fun at him, but to-night she seemed to be nearer to him than ever before.

Good Frau Kessler entered as they sat there talking it all over; she took the trembling girl to her big warm German heart, imprinting a kiss upon her white forehead, and soothing her as if she had been a little child.

"Poor little Liebchen! Poor, poor Kleine!" the good woman murmured, as she patted the golden head and looked into the tearful eyes. "It is a hard road — the road to Art. I tell Johann so, but he will pursue it, and some day, who knows, he may become the Concertmeister —"

"Hush mother, I am only a clod, a mere *Künstler* of low degree," replied Johann, blushing to the very roots of his tawny hair.

The girl rose, and stretched out her hands appealingly.

"I have no right, dear friends," she said simply, "to burden you with my griefs. It is selfish. Forgive me. I know I am over-sensitive, careless and strange to you. I know that I am presuming when

one considers the dignity of the Professor. I am not worthy to be in Berlin, — but oh, I have come to love my violin so much!”

A burst of emotion seemed to overpower her. As she turned to leave the room she staggered, tripped, and fell headlong against the broad oak panel of the heavy door. When they lifted her from the floor, she was unconscious.

For many days and weeks she lay ill in her white bed that had been divested of its German feather mattress above and below, for she wished to feel herself at home in America, she said, when she began to notice people and things again. During her illness, her mind always wandered back to that last day at the Professor's house. Good Frau Kessler nursed her like a mother, and Johann bore many messages of cheer from the Professor.

She seemed to rally slowly. She had long been overworked, and hard study had taken from her whatever nervous force she had once possessed.

The Professor, busy as he was, wrote many long letters to the dear ones in America. These were so full of hope, and brought such cheerful answers, that the girl herself began to take courage.

In the long August afternoons she was able to drive in the Tiergarten with the Professor and his sister, but her heart yearned so for the homeland that one day, when they were quite alone, she put her small white hand in that of her teacher and said,

“I know I shall never be the same again. I am changed. I fear that I can never play now as I once hoped that I could. You have all been so good to me, but I must go home. I can, perhaps, teach there and do some good, but I am going to ask you now to for-

The Crucible of Art

give me for the pain I once caused you. I can never forget it."

The Professor, visibly moved, replied in a voice that she had never heard before, so gentle was it,

"I beg that you will never mention this. I am the real cause. I have suffered. I can never make amends —"

She looked into his face, and there she saw his great soul and something more that made her strong — so strong that she felt as if she could conquer every obstacle in the world. Instinctively she put her hand in his, and thus they rode through the Tiergarten, as the setting sun cast its benediction over the earth.

That night the Professor sat a long time smoking fiercely, in his quaint old garden in Charlottenburg. Then he and his sister played an old Sonata by Locatelli, for they never omitted their evening of music together, except in the stress of winter concerts.

"Mariechen," said the Professor, "I am old and gray — you know that, but after all these years of waiting, I have found a bird for the nest. You know that in early manhood it was necessary for me to renounce all that the right kind of man holds dear in life, in order to attain something in Art. It has brought much joy — this Art — but I have always missed something in my life, I could hardly tell what it was; but lately I know — I know, Mariechen!"

He bowed his head and wept; the tears were the tears of a great man facing a great joy.

Mariechen put her hand on his big shaggy head, and then she bent down and kissed him.

"Duchen, duchen," she whispered, calling him once more by the endearing term of childhood, "I have been praying for this all my life. Hast thou not sur-

Etudes of Life

mised it? She will bring joy and peace, beauty and youth to our home — the ‘Amerikanerin,’ and who but I could have known it all the time!”

When the Professor gave a farewell concert in the Singakademie, preparatory to undertaking his first American tour, those who had heard him play for more than twenty years declared that he had never revealed as he did that night, his possibilities as an artist. Mariechen sat there in the audience beaming with pride, love and happiness, — and the “Amerikanerin?” There was just one shadow on her face. She had seen Frau Kessler come in alone. Johann was not there. He, too, was being tried in the crucible of Art. He, too, must suffer. That night she wrote to an old friend in America:

“We are coming home, and I shall have much to tell you. I now know what it means to become an artist, — to be tried in the fire and come out victorious through much suffering. Do you recall that George Eliot’s *Consuelo* pictured Art with a crown of thorns? Oh, how we grow through pain! And how we radiate strength when we come out of the crucible perfected as far as our natures may become perfected in this life. I told you once that if I gave up my Art, you should have my violin, but I cannot part with it, for it is dear, — it, too, has suffered. If you could hear its message to-day, it would say, ‘There is no Art without Love, and no Love without God. God — Love — Art! These three are the links in the chain of the Perfected Life. And the Violin — it is the House Beautiful where dwells my Twin-Soul!’”

To My Valentine

I am thinking of Thee to-day, my Valentine, thinking hard because others are sending their tokens of affection. I do not need to write Thee a special greeting, for Thou hast been with me constantly for many years, — by the fireside, on the sea, in strange lands and even to the Oasis of the Desert of Unsatisfied Desire. Whatever of joy or success there is left for me in life is linked with Thee. As a mother cherishes her unborn child, so do I cherish Thee, for Thou art my primal Capacity for Affection struggling to raise me to the dignity of True Womanhood. To-day Thou dost seem more precious to me than of yore. I see Thee in the happy faces of children and in the sweet smiles of men and women who need the staff to guide their failing footsteps. I see Thee by the bedside of pain, yea, I have followed Thee almost to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet was I not chilled. O, Thou Beautiful Spirit of Perennial Love, to-day I greet Thee as never before, because, at last, I realize that Thou art none other than my Highest Self.

To My Valentine



SHE was a New England woman, and that generally means that one is reared in a somewhat stereotyped way, with too little poetry in the environment. I can recall her as she sat in front of me at church, her back comb set at exactly the same angle it had assumed for twenty years, her gray hair plain, precise, prim, scanty — as if the head it covered were worn with the drudgery of Life. But *she* never called it drudgery.

Oh, how I longed for her sunshine and her faith in the long years of our friendship! She was my best friend, and that counts in New England, but I cannot recall any real love-token that ever passed our lips. She understood and I, in turn, felt her living, breathing, human, sensitive womanhood all the time about me, strengthening me and shaming mine own poor selfishness and earthiness. I had seen so much more of the world than she had that she depended upon me for breadth of vision in things musical and mental — never spiritual, for she was my uplift.

You will be surprised when I tell you that she never once expressed a wish for a larger life than that which came to her in her little country town. The "old people" needed her, and the "young people" needed lessons, — that was enough for her to know. Duty was the first tenet of her life, but it was loving

Etudes of Life

duty, and God blessed and crowned her work a hundred fold each year.

I recall my first music lessons with her. There seemed to be a faint, almost imperceptible essence in the room; she never failed to carry it wherever she went. It was the aroma of spirituality which always accompanies the handmaids of God in their ceaseless service to the children of the rank and file. And I have known rare maternal instincts in these frail, hard-worked, thin-featured women who serve and yearn over youth with a devotion seldom equalled save in the annals of martyrdom, for Maternity is not merely childbearing, but childrearing, and Love is not so physical a thing that it needs to limit itself to our own flesh and blood relations.

One day in midwinter, when the snow lay glistening on the ground and the sleigh bells tinkled in the still air their first belated welcome to rosy and eager youth, she came to me to minister and to comfort, for I had been very ill. I forgot, in her presence, the long days of pain and nights of fretful moaning over the loss of concerts and lessons. Then it was that she told me how she had saved, planned and sacrificed, that she might go to the city and study with one of whom we think with silent reverence, for his wonderful work is ended. It was in his presence, she said, that she had learned the true meaning of Art to the toiler and breadwinner. How her face glowed as she related how he taught!

"My poor fingers," said she, "have never been clever. I am not gifted with executive power. I had almost believed myself a mere machine, had it not been that I felt the impulse to prepare young hearts and brains for Life as well as for Art. I

To My Valentine

seemed so weak and helpless in the presence of *his* great gifts. But, as he sat improvising, or working on some new composition, his keen eyes fixed on mine with a subtle kind of mystery in them, he told me that the most powerful forces for Art in America were often found in communities where one drew a small circle and concentrated one's brightest and best upon a few individuals. To influence the ideals of a little town, said he, meant infinitely more than the transient fame of mere virtuosity. I began to feel strong in my small sphere, striving in the studio, the church and the home, to carry a living message through Art to every human soul. Before that I had seemed but a plain, New England woman with only a feeble imagination and fewer gifts. He awoke in me all that lay dormant; the impulse to serve more truly and acceptably the least of God's children. And, best of all, he said to me that if God had denied me Genius, he had given me a great craving for Knowledge, and a love for all things beautiful.

"My soul now cried out in ecstasy at the thought of powers and possibilities I had hitherto not realized. I silently thanked God for the inspiration of those lessons to which I had looked forward so long and eagerly. I came home and served. The creating of ideals seemed to energize my vagrant faculties. There were some dark days, but he said it would all come out right, and it did."

Her simple yet eloquent story aroused in me genuine enthusiasm for her life and appreciation of her work; in the months that followed, when again I took up the thread of life in a great city, I seemed to be less restless, less impatient for the mere plaudits of the passing throng who to-day extol and to-morrow

Etudes of Life

are indifferent in the light of a new star or a fresh sensation.

Life began gradually to mean more to me than mere pleasure-giving. My soul cried out to serve a few even as she had done so faithfully and so well.

After a time I went abroad, and I saw no more of her for many months, but I afterwards learned that my letters, written in the feverish life of a great foreign city, were treasured and eagerly read to her pupils. I heard that the long, severe winter had been a great tax on her strength, and that her friends feared she would be obliged to go away for a season of rest. The next year there came still more dubious reports of her health and then, at last, the news that the dear hands were silent forever. It seemed to me that there was a great void in my life, a great aching void that could never be filled. Had she left me no word — no message of joy or peace, no uplift for the silent years to come?

One morning in February I arose pale and listless, jaded by the opera of the night before. There came a knock at my door.

"You have forgotten, Liebchen," cried the Moskowski Girl, "that it is St. Valentine's Day. Look, look! and one for you from America."

I took the package in my hand and I thought, as with eager trembling fingers I opened it, that some delicate and almost forgotten aroma emanated from its folds. The Moskowski Girl had a dozen love tokens in her hand, but she did not show them to me.

"Poor Liebchen," she whispered, as she saw my tears, "poor, poor Liebchen, there is, after all, only one America and that seems so far away."

To My Valentine

She went out softly and I was alone — no, not alone, for the message lay on my desk. It was a piece of illuminated cardboard on which were written these lines:



To My Valentine.

I am thinking of Thee to-day, my Valentine, thinking hard because others are sending their tokens of affection. I do not need to write Thee a special greeting, for Thou hast been with me constantly for many years, — by the fireside, on the sea, in strange lands and even to the Oasis of the Desert of Unsatisfied Desire. Whatever of joy or success there is left for me in Life is linked with Thee. As a mother cherishes her unborn child, so do I cherish Thee, for Thou art my primal Capacity for Affection struggling to raise me to the true dignity of Womanhood. To-day Thou dost seem more precious to me than of yore. I see Thee in the happy faces of children and in the sweet smiles of men and women who need the Staff to guide their failing footsteps. I see Thee by the bedside of pain, yea, I have followed Thee almost to the Valley of the Shadow of Death, yet was I not chilled. Oh, Thou Beautiful Spirit of Perennial Love, to-day I greet Thee as never before, because, at last, I realize that Thou art none other than my Highest Self.

There were bleeding hearts on the page, but I hardly saw them. There, in her loved hand, shone out the message that should go down the years like

a benediction. There was a letter, too, written by her loving hand; how eloquent its timbre!

"Dear One," it said, "I am going away where Art lives and God loves. I would have put off the journey at first. There seemed so much to be done here. But the time has come, I know. I am sending my Valentine. I, who have so long served Art and my neighbor's children, have at last to let go my hold upon Life. You, Little One, must take hold of the chain. You will carry out my ideals with your fresh young soul and your wide experience. Even if you can give only a part of yourself to my garden, I want you — and you alone. I have sent many Valentines. This is the only one I ever sent to myself — my Better Self. It is yours, for you are to be my Other Self, the one who will carry out my ideals, — the first child of my long ministry."

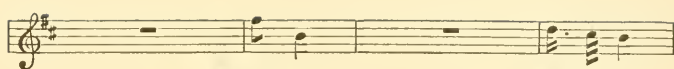


"Professor," I said, "I am going back to America. There is a place there that needs me sorely. I will do what I can for it and try to stimulate some nobler soul to do its work even better than I can. After all, the concert life is not the most satisfying. I must serve the people who made it possible for me to come to Europe for study, and they need me now."

"Little One," answered the Professor, "you will always carry a great message. Remember that the gate is open and every summer, when the rest season comes, you are to sojourn with us. There are many things of which we will speak not found in sonata or fugue. The woman who wrote that Valentine was on the heights; we are only scaling the sides of the

To My Valentine

mountain. Did you see the sunset last night? They say that St. Hedwig's had a halo around its spire, — an optical illusion, of course, but they called it a Halo. I wish we had been there to see it, you and I, but the Valentine lady — she would have had no need of it."



Hear ye,

Is-ra-el!



Is-ra-el! hear . . . what the Lord speak-eth!

Astrid



STOOD leaning over the railing while the stevedores on the steamship Aragon were throwing great bales of cotton into the hold, accompanying their task with a monotonous song, the words of which sounded strangely in my ears.

"Papa," said a child's voice, "I heard them say 'Down on the Swanee,' and then they threw the cotton way over in that corner. Now listen, they are crying 'Back of the graveyard' — see! there it goes, papa, over on the other side of the ship. Isn't it funny that the negroes have names for every part of the ship?"

"Who told you that, Astrid?" asked a tall, blue-eyed Wotan, as he bent over the child and kissed her forehead.

"Why, the engineer that carried me in his arms when mamma was sick, — my 'chief,'" answered the little one.

The family were evidently returning from the South, where, as their subsequent conversation revealed, they had gone for the child's health.

Quaint Charleston offered no real pleasure to them. Astrid was no better.

Oh, how I longed to right things for this great strong man who sang out so lustily with the stevedores, and who was as tender as a woman toward his little girl.

That he was an opera singer I did not doubt, for he walked up and down the deck, his book in hand, humming a line or two, and smiling back at his little one, as she lay propped up in her steamer chair.

"Well, how is Astrid today?" I heard a fine manly voice exclaim, and the chief engineer, blue-eyed, genuinely honest and unmistakably English, leaned over the child and ran his fingers through her golden curls.

"Very well, thank you, 'chief,'" Astrid replied. Then with naïve innocence she continued, while her little hand stole into his big tanned palm, "Haven't you any little girls at home?"

"Nary a one," replied her friend, with a blush under his tan, "I'm a bachelor."

"Poor man, — poor, poor 'chief,'" the little girl soothingly murmured, as she patted his hand. "Sometime you will have some little girls of your own. Papa says one little girl is worth a whole bagful of money."

"That's so, Astrid," the young "chief" answered earnestly, "a little girl like you *is* worth a fortune, and some day you'll earn a fortune for your father and mother, and then we'll all go to Europe, — just think of it!"

He laughed a jolly rollicking laugh, and lifting the child tenderly in his strong arms, the two went up and down the deck singing snatches of *The Elijah* and *The Messiah*, for had not the "chief" been a choir boy in England, and had not Astrid heard her father and mother sing from all the greatest operas and oratorios all her short life? Brief as that life had been, she had grown so wonderfully in mind and heart that the frail little body just seemed to be shrinking away.

They tried to check her precocity, but it was so necessary to her being that at last they let her grow, and she grew toward the Infinite every day. When she sang, or when the tiny fingers worked out a theme at the piano, and her big earnest eyes looked into your soul, you knew — everyone knew — that Astrid had been initiated into the deepest problems of God's paternity.

When, at last, the two friends discovered the fair-haired Norwegian mother, with her large proportions, yet refined and spiritual face, beaming with love and tenderness, as she came up the gang plank after a brief shopping trip, like two amiable children they sat down in the steamer chair and ate chocolates and bonbons in absolute content.

"Sweet mamma, let's sing 'Lift Thine Eyes.' Don't you hear the negroes singing? If we sing too, they may work better," said the child, when, at last, the sweets were eaten.

"We must do all she asks," the mother whispered to the young Englishman, "all she asks."

A wave of pain crossed her usually placid face. Astrid was her all. They had told her in Jacksonville — the doctors in New York, also — that there was no hope. She prayed to God that it might not be true that the life that she had begotten, nourished and idolized, must be taken from her. Could life have any joy for her with Astrid gone?



They had finished "Lift Thine Eyes." The stevedores had suddenly ceased their monotonous song. The air seemed surcharged with expectancy. A shiver, a snort of the great engine, the sound of many good-

Etudes of Life

byes, and a child's voice rang out clear and true above the confusion :

“ God be with you till we meet again ! ”

The young Englishman had gone to his engine, but Astrid's father and mother, and all the passengers in the vicinity, joined in the song.

On the wharf rude sailors, stevedores, and friends of outward bound passengers stood with bared heads. It was Astrid's benediction.

The good ship steamed out of the beautiful harbor, and Astrid turned her little face, as she sang, toward the Battery, where the sun lay reflected in a ball of gold that shot out ray upon ray of gladness among waving palms and flowering oleanders.



It was a Sunday afternoon in May. The roof garden of the Children's Hospital was swarming with pale little creatures who constituted the convalescent patients. Astrid was there in her little wheeled carriage, her knee propped up to keep her from the constant pain that had racked her life for weeks. Her face seemed more spiritual. The great blue eyes looked within instead of without, Heavenward instead of earthward. She was so emaciated that one could clasp one's fingers around her wrists. After the first operation, she had seemed better. Her mother had sailed for Europe to fulfil a short engagement, for artists are breadwinners after all, and it was necessary.

There was an iron railing around the roof garden and, as Astrid's nurse reached a certain spot, she fastened a handkerchief there. Instantly a similar

beacon floated from a window of a neighboring house. In a few minutes a figure appeared on the roof, and there stood Astrid's papa, who could visit his little girl at the Hospital only once a day, all dressed, as she had wished, as if for the opera. She clapped her hands in childish glee, as her dear "Il Trovatore" floated upon the air.

Suddenly a carriage stopped at the very entrance of the narrow street that lay between the apartment house and the Hospital. A lady, beautifully gowned, still young and of queenly bearing, stepped out, held up her jewelled hand and, with a nod of recognition, began to sing to her stage lover. It was Madame Aviglia, the great prima donna.

"Ah, I have sighed to rest me —"

Astrid listened with bated breath, clasping her hands in an ecstasy of delight.

"They sing so beautifully," she cried. "She has almost as beautiful a voice as my mother — but not quite. I want her up here. Please call her."

The nurse beckoned over the railing, then drew back. Dr. L——, the great physician, at the head of the Hospital, was shaking hands with the lady, and Astrid's papa was waving a farewell to her from his place on the roof. She smiled, looked up at the children, threw a kiss and was gone.

A week passed. What may not happen in a week! They cabled for Astrid's mother. The second operation was not a success. Even if the little limb were amputated there was no hope for life. The great doctors who had seen the wonderful vigor of both parents shook their heads, yet no longer wondered that this frail, gifted little potentiality held on to life so tenaciously.

It was Sunday morning and Children's Day in the churches. Astrid heard the glad bells, and they told her that a beautiful lady had sent her some flowers, several of which she held close to her breast for a long time. Her father came to see her in the morning, bringing a cablegram, "a sweet message" he called it, from the dear absent mamma. The nurse pinned it to the counterpane, so that the child might often be reminded of it.

"Will mamma come soon?" the little one asked, as she fixed her great blue eyes on her father and the nurse.

"Very soon," they answered cheerfully. She plied the same question to the great doctor when he came, and often and often, as other members of the Hospital staff passed her bed, she answered, "Very well, thank you, my mamma is coming from Europe soon."

They allowed her father to remain a long time that day at the Hospital. He sat very quietly by her side, and when she dozed off to sleep, her hand lay tightly clasped in his. Four o'clock in the afternoon came. There was a slight stir in the ward. Several people entered. Among them was a beautiful lady who smiled back at the head nurse and the doctors with genuine womanly interest and pleasure. Madame Aviglia had consented to sing for the children.

"Where shall I stand, doctor?" she asked of the great physician, the friend of her youth.

"Right here at the end," he replied, "close to little Astrid's bed."

Astrid was at the end of the long line, and there was a wide screen beside the little white bed. Madame Aviglia shuddered. "She is Herr Schaul's child, is she not?" she asked. The physician nodded gravely.

Many of the children who were able were lying propped up in bed so that they could see the great prima donna. Astrid alone lay with her eyes closed, her little hand in that of her nurse.

First Madame Aviglia sang some children's songs: "My Bed is My Boat," "Wynken, Blinken and Nod," and "The Gingerbread Man," that made the children cry out with delight.

"Would you sing 'The Songs My Mother Sang'?" asked the physician, as he bent toward her.

She smiled assent, as she placed her hand on his arm, for they were very old friends.

As she sang, Astrid's eyes, large and full and eager, with new and unwonted light, were turned full upon her. The child half rose in bed, and the kind nurse propped her up among the pillows. Two great tears coursed down the little one's face. When the last notes of the song had died away, Madame Aviglia was stooping over the bed. "Astrid," she said, as she kissed the white forehead, "what other songs do you love?"

"If you were mamma you would sing *my* song," said the child. She hummed over that old, old lullaby by Kucken, only the words were in the Norwegian. Madame Aviglia sat down by the bed and, taking the little hand in hers, sang it over and over to the child's delight and satisfaction.

"Now I would like 'Hear Ye, Israel,'" said Astrid, after the kind nurse had given her her medicine.

The head physician had been called out a moment. On his return he came close to Astrid's side and whispered to the singer, "Just one more, she is very tired."

"We are going to sing 'Hear Ye, Israel,'" said

Astrid. "Then," with a smile toward the singer, "you will go home to *your* little girl, I guess."

A great wave of feeling passed over the face of Madame Aviglia.

"If God gave me a little girl like you, Astrid," she said close to the child's ear, "I think I would be the happiest woman in all the world."

"Then you shall be my mamma while mine is away," said Astrid, as she kissed the jewelled hand beside her.

Throughout all the wards and far out into the street that beautiful voice travelled, but Astrid's quavering little notes in unison were heard only by those who stood at her bedside.

"Israel! Israel!" Had the Father of all Mercies forgotten that the mother bird was hurrying across the ocean to her nestling?

The prima donna kissed the child's forehead.

"Good-bye, Astrid, good-bye, we shall meet again."

She suddenly took the arm of her friend, the physician. She had never been close to the passing of a child into the Infinite, and her soul shrank back. Astrid smiled from her white pillow. *She* was very happy.

In the physician's office, the two old friends paused.

"Is there no hope, Frederick?" she asked.

"None at all, Marie," he answered gravely. "We are making it easy for her. He knows it — the father. They let it go too long — it is tuberculosis of the bone. You see they had reverses here at first. She, the mother, didn't seem to make it a success, but both —"

"Are very gifted," Mme. Aviglia interposed, "and I will see the management at the Opera. They must have more salary."

"You are very good, Marie, always generous and thoughtful of others, always —"

The woman turned toward her friend, and her breath came quickly.

"Don't say that, Frederick," she cried, impetuously, "don't, don't! I can't bear it now. I chose art and you chose medicine; we have both realized our youthful ambition. We are celebrated, but oh, how small and dwarfed and pitiable has been the life within. We have been alone, Frederick, alone, alone!"

The face of the great physician grew eager.

"Marie," he cried, "is it too late?"

There was a knock at the door. A young doctor entered.

"Little Astrid has gone," he said. "It was very quick, as we all expected. We had no time to send for her father. She passed away as you saw her, smiling."

"I will go to her father," said the doctor. "No, Marie, you are a woman — you can do better."

When Madame Aviglia entered the apartment house across the street, it was quite dark and there was no sound save the distant tones of a piano. She followed the sound and knocked at the door.

Astrid's father came quickly.

"Madame Aviglia," he cried, "I thought it was the doctor, I —"

"Comrade," she said, as she took the hands of the man in her strong, warm grasp, "to-day has been the happiest day of my life. I have seen and known Astrid. Her sweet spirit will go with me wherever I go throughout life, to make me better, purer, nobler. The God-light had almost faded within me, and I saw only the husk of things. I was farther from God than

Etudes of Life

when I set out on my journey. I had gained Knowledge. You have had Love and Knowledge. Without Love there is no perfect Life. Oh, my rich friend, she — the little star of your life — is not dead. Her spirit will abide forever. Her life will be the closest link you have with the Infinite."



Astrid's funeral was held in a vine-covered chapel in a beautiful New England burying ground. Madame Aviglia chose the spot. It was close to her own dear mother and father. She knew that her friends could visit it during the year when they needed to get away from the worry and hard work of the operatic season.

There was only a little organ in the chapel, but the village organist was thoroughly musical, and when Madame Aviglia sang, "Hear Ye, Israel," after her old pastor had told the story of the last days of the child's life, the country people listened attentively, and many wept, but the child's mother was strangely calm. She had arrived in time to prepare with her own hands the shroud of her little one. She seemed dazed and grief-spent.

On that rare June day, there were four people who bowed their heads and thanked God, as the pastor clearly and distinctly ended his prayer, "A little child shall lead them; though this little life has left them, let Thy Fatherhood comfort and sustain them."

A young Englishman, tanned and weather-beaten, with a sweet girl-bride at his side, and Astrid's physician with Madame Aviglia, followed the little one to her flower-strewn resting place, and when all that was mortal had passed from their sight, they looked up to Heaven and pledged their faith anew.

The Cry of the Ungifted

The Cry of the Ungifted



HE vast canopy of Heaven overhead and myriad beacon lights in the silence of the night; humanity, great suffering humanity, below on God's footstool — that great round Earth that, waking or sleeping, moves in its unbroken orbit, never questioning why; in the distance the faint sound of music in a quaint minor mode, simple, peaceful, measureless; all this and a figure standing alone on a bleak promontory overlooking the restless, unsatisfied ocean. The man is bowed, bent, old before his time, but the love of Life has not been crushed out of him by the grinding wheels of Necessity: the untaught, the ungifted, the artisan, the human clod.

Suddenly a line of light across the sky, quick as a meteor and as mysterious as the Aurora Borealis, sending its shaft straight to the feet of the lonely man on the cliff. With trembling limbs he sinks upon his knees, bows his head and waits for a sign.

Another figure, veiled, elusive, noble of mien, God-like of stature, glides through the soft mellow light, half concealing, half revealing itself; pityingly divine and old with the weight of years, but wearing the insignia of perennial youth; grave and retrospective, yet animated with the motive power of the life of our time, and full of the sweet optimism of the future. A figure almost unsexed in the possession of

Etudes of Life

the loftiest attributes of both manhood and womanhood, with a face in whose lineaments are stamped clear revelation and perpetual benediction.

The artisan raises his head, but continues to kneel, as if waiting for some touch that shall connect his soul with the beautiful things of Life and the mystery of Immortality. The veiled figure stands silent and mysterious, full of nobility and abiding sympathy, waiting, almost agonizingly, to awaken the soul of the suppliant, with a touch of heavenly beauty that surpasses all human knowledge, and radiates to the unlooking stars of Heaven.

The figure of the man quivers. Blindly, passionately, with tears streaming down his furrowed cheeks, he half rises and extends his hands to his deliverer. In his eyes there shines the light of unfettered longing for the beautiful things of Life, hitherto intangible and vague. The old lines of grovelling jealousy, sullen despair and hopeless ignorance, begin to fade; and love, beauty and peace toward all men, change his features so that, in the light from above, he appears like unto his mysterious guest.

He rises to his feet, utters a cry that echoes to the rock-bound shores of the land of his boyhood, where other souls like his toil on and see not the light in the sky, nor know that lying within them is the Divine Spark that can glorify their marred and warped existence. Suddenly they look up and see Eternal Beauty above and around them; all the old marks of waste and failure and evil depart, and there is a new song in their souls.

In the years to come they will see the veiled figure descending from Heaven, sometimes as they gaze upon a beautiful work of art, sometimes after listening

The Cry of the Ungifted

to a beautiful symphony, and again as they strive to beautify God's waste places, for the veiled figure moves forever, and is named Force, the evidence of the First Cause of all Creation, the Creator.

Whether man wills or not, the Divine Spark is within him, however far he may have fallen ; and when it is kindled, he learns not only the beauty of holiness, but the holiness of beauty.

The Old 'Cellist's Prayer

Lord, let me never teach a note that is not divine, —

That does not help some soul to better live.
Make me respect my material so much that I
shall not shirk.

Help me to be honest toward Art and loyal to
the best in Life.

Teach me to be pure as the happy children whom
I lead.

Give me the tone-color that is but a reflection
of the inner light of perfect peace with
God and Man.

Let me hold to Ideals, for there is an enormous
expenditure of energy in the pursuit of the
Ideal.

Keep me from caring more for Art than for
human needs—more for the Perfected Bow
than for the Unbent Twig.

Guide me in my work that I may do the best that
I can in the face of absolute Truth; and when,
Lord, my work is done, grant me but a modest
competence, — enough to make the path a little
easier as the Light grows dim and the hands
become too feeble to guide the Staff. Then
take me Home, for I shall be tired — very
tired after the long journey.

The Old 'Cellist's Prayer



HEY came trooping in with their violins, just as I stood blowing the snow off my coat collar, for it was a blustering night, quite equal to any in the whole of Kriss Kringle's history. As I sat down, prepared to toast my aching feet before the drift-wood fire (for my friends had never laid by their old traditions and the questionable luxury of a fireplace), Adolph tumbled over his violin case, and loud wails immediately issued from the mouth of a totally unharmed but frightened little boy who, being plump, usually fell hard. Heaven bless him! His tears were dried in a moment, and all went well until we were called to tea, a totally unnecessary function after a glorious Christmas dinner. How fast our tongues flew! But, alas, no one did justice to the feast. Poor little Preston's eyes almost bulged out of his head, he was so anxious to eat the chocolate cake; but nature rebelled, as it fortunately does when a full stomach absolutely refuses to do more work. I saw Robert stowing away some cheese straws and fudge in his pockets, but when he saw me looking, he grew apprehensive lest I might betray his secret. How could I betray even the slightest weakness of "my boys" at Christmas time? There were, indeed, very few more secrets to be revealed, for all the children had received their presents, and

the big tree stood stark and cold in the front hall. I should have kept it lighted until New Year's Eve, as my good friends do in Germany, for there one gives a whole week to the Christmas festivities.

After tea we all stood round the table, joined hands and sang an old German song called the "Weinachtsmann," which I had taught the children. "When I'm a man I'm going to Germany and be a Prince," Knox said in a loud voice, "I'm going to take lessons from Paganini, too!" This outburst caused such merriment that poor little Knox, the youngest of all except Adolph, our baby violinist, got under the table to hide his mortification.

"Good evening and God bless you!" cried a big hearty voice at the door, and there stood the Professor, his great coat collar turned up to his ears and his bushy gray eyebrows full of snow, which he was rapidly mopping off; as he laid aside his hat and coat, he turned to each lad with his wonderful smile and patted all the round heads with true affection.

"The Professor! The Professor!" the children shouted, as their good friend deposited his 'cello carefully in the corner. "And not a word for me, Kinder?" asked a motherly voice at the door, as the Professor's helpmate, fat and rosy, appeared.

The boys crowded round her, for they loved the dear "Duchen," as the Professor always called her, as if she were still young and petite as in her youth. What warmth and cheer these good German friends brought with them! Such a treat! The Professor would play some solos, and "Duchen" would accompany him; then, if all went well, the boys would play some Wohlfahrt Trios, good Gebauer, and pos-

The Old 'Cellist's Prayer

sibly Robert might be asked to try the beloved Haydn.

Little Adolph began to droop early, and the tiny one-eighth violin had to take its place beside a tired little boy on the sofa, but Knox and Robert and Preston just kept on playing and winking their tired eyes like heroes till, at last, Sallie Lou, the maid, brought in pop-corn balls, fudge, some dainty cakes and real hot chocolate "with froth on it," as Knox expressed himself.

When the Professor and his wife had sung "Heil dir im SiegerKranz," which is the same thing as our "America," the words of which the boys loudly declaimed, and the Haydn Trio had at last been played successfully, the boys, with a good-night for all their friends, stalked off to bed in the big chamber in the north wing of the house where David, the best watch dog in the world, kept nightly guard. They had just left us a moment when I saw the Professor's wife go softly up stairs with the dear mother, — for the motherless as well as the mother loved to look upon the little faces in their white beds, and to hear the last whispered prayers.

"Have you ever thought," asked the Professor, as he puffed away at his pipe, "that children are the real links between us and Heaven? God means that all 'grown-ups' should serve youth in some capacity. I never recall having told a child a falsehood. I can't. The little one is so fresh from the heart of God."

This was much to say — very much for him. The Professor was a reserved man. He had never had a little boy of his own, but hundreds of "boys," young and old, had known and loved him, yes, had learned

some of Life's noblest lessons at his side, for the Professor taught his pupils how to live as well as how to play.

"We teachers do not merely play instruments of wood," the good man continued, as he sat knocking the ashes out of his pipe. "We play into human lives when we stand before the public, for every stage is Life's stage, and we touch every chord of the human heart, as we speak the message, great or small, that God has entrusted to a bow or a human voice."

I caught his thought. Like him I had grown old and gray in the service of Art, but with it my neighbor's children had grown as dear as the flowers of Spring to me, yea, more precious than the jewels of a Queen's diadem, and in their love my heart still beat the rhythmic beat of youth. Some of them did not know, could not fathom, the depth of my love, but God gave them to me for Art just as He gave them to their mothers for nurture. And how proud we were to share the honor and the blessing!

"Who says he is too great to teach a little child?" exclaimed the Professor, after a long silence. "Who dares to belittle himself by confessing that he sees no glory in the simple faith of open-hearted youth?"

He rose to his full height of over six feet, and straightened back his huge shoulders, while his fine grey eyes, gleaming like sentinels in that massive head, burned into my very soul the message — one of those flash-lights of true art-affinity, that come to us, thank God, as if to prop up our human frailties.

"Lord," he cried with upraised hand, "let me never teach a note that is not Divine, that does not help some soul to better live. Make me respect my material so much that I shall not shrink. Help me

The Old 'Cellist's Prayer

to be honest toward Art and loyal to the best in Life. Teach me to be pure as the happy children whom I lead. Give me the tone-color that is but a reflection of the inner light of perfect peace with God and Man. Let me hold to Ideals, for there is in this age an enormous expenditure of energy in the pursuit of the Unreal. Keep me from caring more for Art than for human needs — more for the Perfected Bow than for the Unbent Twig. Guide me in my work that I may do the best that I can in the face of absolute Truth; and when, Lord, my work is done, grant me but a modest competence, — enough to make the path a little easier, as the Light grows dim and the hands become too feeble to guide the Staff. Then take me Home, for I shall be tired — very tired after the long journey."

"Amen," a sleepy little voice answered from the sofa. We had all forgotten little Adolph lying there fast asleep with his beloved violin.

He sat up, rubbed his eyes and began to cry.

"Hush, Liebchen," said the old Professor, as he took the little boy in his arms and walked out of the room, and up the broad stairs at whose top stood the dear mother, for she had come back for the last one of her little band of sleepers.

"He has said his prayer," said the Professor softly, as he put the little boy in his white cot. "We said one together."

I wonder if that prayer went Home. I think it did, for was it not Christmas night?

Hove honors and obeys,
ove suffers and is kind,
ove reaps where others sow,
ove leads the patient blind.

Soul Technic



LTHEA was a plain, unconventional woman, with a habit of contracting her eyebrows and twitching her mouth at the corners when she talked or played. She might have been anywhere between thirty and forty, her vivacity and freshness were so misleading.

Olivia, her friend, was older, — one of those women who grow more beautiful as middle life approaches.

When the invitation came, though there were manuscripts and manuscripts to look over, letters to write, publishers to interview, and no end of schemes of livelihood to be worked out, Althea turned loose from everything and journeyed to the "shack."

What a sense of freedom she felt, as the familiar lines of the winding Saugatuck met her eyes! Some might love the freedom of the woods. Althea loved water. Somehow its ebb and flow seemed a part of her restless life.

Olivia never made "company" of her friends. Her home was a home-made one, neat, orderly, artistic, comfortable, simple and unconventional like its owners.

"You are the most restful thing in the world," the younger woman said, when they met at the station.

Olivia smiled, and her smile was pure content.

The violin, safely packed away in its worn case, the

dress suit case with its few clothes and stray manuscripts that would not stay at home — her “treasures,” as she called them, were at once seized by a loving hand and, in the twinkling of an eye, Old Jerry was trotting down the street at a pace so unusual that he looked at a passing street car with cool disdain. Had he not trotting blood in his veins?

June, beautiful June, on the Saugatuck! The city woman inhaled long deep breaths of pure air, and laughed a low gurgling laugh that contained the very essence of perfect happiness.

It was not until the evening lamps were lighted and the two were sitting in a deep corner of the wide veranda that Olivia really began to talk, and she was the most wonderful talker in the world to the woman beside her. They spoke of the old professional life.

“You are sure you don’t long for it again?” queried Althea.

The swish, swish of the Saugatuck was the only sound heard for a few minutes. Then Olivia spoke in her warm, rich, well-modulated voice that men and women always loved. It was as mellow and as soft as a muted violin at times; then it grew to a ’cello tone, its throbbing intensity rousing one to a wild pitch of excitement, only to die away in a simple, plaintive cadence that fitted the wonderful maternal side of the woman.

“You know, dear,” she said, “when I married and gave up my art-life, I had but one thought — to make him happy, to be a good wife to him and to be loved, *loved*, *LOVED* as no other woman in the world had ever been loved.

"We were very happy for a time, and then he grew restless. It almost tore my heart-strings to see it. I tried to absorb him still more, believing that my great love was a panacea for all ills, but he grew more and more restless. Publishers wrote to him and made offers; he never answered. Literary friends called. He was moody and silent.

"At length — I remember that night, it was a wild one on the Saugatuck, and I heard the fog horns on the Sound — I asked him what had come into his life that made him so unhappy. He looked at me, dear, and said, 'Would you mind very much, little wife, if I asked you to go away for a few days? I wish to be alone.'"

"'Alone, alone!' — I shall never forget those words. I seemed half-dazed, half-mad in my desire to hide my wounded spirit from his gaze, but I never reproached him. Something told me it would come out right.

"I left him in the early morning, when the fog was still hanging close to the Saugatuck and the marshes were dank and dripping. I went home to my mother and, dear, God gave me work to do to fill the aching void and ease the pain. My mother became very ill and her life hung by a single thread for weeks. My husband's letters came often; they were filled with tender solicitude, but he never spoke of his literary work.

"One day I received a telegram that he needed me. My mother had recovered. Oh! I cannot tell you how my heart beat as I passed the old familiar places along the route. At Albany a stranger entered the car and sat down beside me. He was a little blond man with

Etudes of Life

blue eyes, kindly and eager. I remember just how he looked as he sat cutting the leaves of a new magazine. He turned to a poem. A delighted exclamation burst from his lips. I looked and, dear, the whole world seemed to be surging before me. My pulses reeled, my eyes swam with tears, my heart — my poor starved heart — almost burst. It was my husband's poem 'Soul Technic!'

"The little man looked at me. 'You love poetry,' he said, 'read it; it is a great poem. That man, whoever he is, like my countryman Bjornsen, must have had a wife who gave him peace to work.'"

I, who had selfishly absorbed my husband's love, given him little time, opportunity, or inspiration for work in our early wedded life, I — the woman — stood confronted by Myself. And how I hated the Past with all its mistakes and selfishness!

"In my absence he had found Himself and had then bent all his forces toward an art-ideal. The poem, perhaps outlined years before, had taken shape, becoming a living, breathing, human thing in its perfect relation to Life's needs.

"As I read, it seemed as if all my selfishness and restlessness vanished. I was no more a mere woman. I became a complement of that other life to which I was wedded, yet into which I had as yet fitted so unworthily. Life seemed dearer, God seemed nearer.

"The man at my side smiled, as I read. 'A great poem,' he said again, 'and the man who wrote it is no weakling. Life and Art are to him the greatest things in the world.'"

"I closed the book. We were nearing New York.

Soul Technic

How could I meet my husband and not confess in my eyes and voice that I had not understood in the first sacred weeks of marriage? Should I go home or should I go quietly to a little family hotel in the unfashionable part of the city and think, *think*, THINK? I could not tell him how I, in my selfish love, had been jealous of that other rare and beautiful life of his — his first affection.

“ ‘Olivia ! Olivia ! ’ ”——

“ The train had stopped, and I was with the hurrying throng on the platform. My husband was beside me, dear, his great brown eyes peering into mine, his hand — but I must not tell you all. I smiled through tears, as I said, ‘ I have just seen the poem, dear. A man showed it to me on the train. He said that you were like Bjornsen — your wife gave you peace to work — ’

“ My voice broke. He looked at me, Althea, and understood. We have always understood since then.”



In the “ rest corner ” of a New York studio, Althea has placed a copy of “ Soul Technic.” Underneath is a little garden scene in front of the “ shack.” Olivia is picking flowers for her husband’s study. He is not there.

Will you pause and read ?

Soul Technik.

Into the busy mart of Life I passed,
My crude tools in my hand, —
Artisan born and bred,
With some God-light within,
A mere dull clod without a germ of might.
And there I met another man
As arid, small and paltry as myself,
Save that he had acquired some certain skill
That men call Genius by the grace of God.
And when we took each other by the hand,
And felt the warm rich blood within our veins,
And looked into each other's eyes for light, —
Behold an instinct, towering o'er the wreck
Of misspent years of Opportunity,
Raised to a Soul the cringing, dwarféd Past,
And broke the shackles with a single stroke.

Silent, we paused with reverent attitude,
Waiting for God's own stamp upon the brow, —
Then Love passed by and looked into our souls,
That scarred and thirsty shrank before her gaze.
No words she spoke, nor heard we a command,
But swift the God-man entered in,
While down our sunken, callous cheeks
Great scalding tears fell thick and fast,
And all the mighty muscles in our arms
Stood out like whipcords, as we staggered forth
To do with tools, with heart, with brain, with soul,
The work that in God's Vineyard lay undone;
Then Love—the Woman LOVE—passed from our
sight,
Leaving a sign above a lintel old.
We read, and reading pondered o'er the words, —
Then homeward went, each to his open door.

Soul Technic

Love honors and obeys,
Love suffers and is kind,
Love reaps where others sow,
Love leads the patient blind.
To suffer, bleed and die,
For child and home and hearth,
This is what Love hath done
While making Heaven of Earth.
Oh Man, when from thy side
Gone is her ministry,
Though thou hadst peace to do thy tasks
Through all Eternity,
And though the world thy name
Cried to the stars above, —
There is no gift of God so great
As Woman's perfect Love.

Auf Wiedersehen, dear Land
toward Thee I've looked
Since childhood's years, with
yearnings fond and vague.

Auf Wiedersehen



THE good ship Pennsylvania steamed out of the harbor of Hamburg. There were many good-byes, good wishes expressed in tearful language, long salutations from dock to steamer and back again, and a company of strangers began, as is the custom of travellers, to become acquainted with each other. It was an easy matter, especially with the pleasure-loving Americans, for some had common friends in the home-land and others had student affiliations abroad. Thus do some of the most vital and helpful associations of life spring up, grow and thrive. It is hard to think that later friendships are not enduring. Lowell said, "After wrinkles come, few plant, but water dead ones with vain tears," and yet, as we develop, we need the help of others who have climbed still higher. May not the new links be the strongest?

There were two that August day who sat apart, looking off toward the shifting landscape of the Blankenese, dreamily, sadly, yet with souls attuned to the beauty that, colored by foreign residence, grows upon one unawares, leaving a vague regret, when again one returns to the white frame houses and cool green blinds of New England, for alas! we are more orderly, neat and thrifty than æsthetic, and the stone wall and purple rail have

Etudes of Life

not yet the traditions that make artists and poets of us.

The two that sat thus were young musicians, one already a concert pianist who had begun her career auspiciously and legitimately, without bribe or barter. She was city bred, gentle, well-poised, of unusually vivacious temperament, modest as to her gifts, and full of the joy of living. The other was a strange creature, restless, moody, easily irritated and devoted to one ideal — her violin. Her childhood had been spent in a secluded valley; her earliest memories were linked with the delight of wood and field, of ponds fresh with lilies, and of gardens full of old fashioned flowers. She was intimate with every bird on the wing and every tree whose shade had comforted her when, barefooted and worn and weary, she rested after her childhood rambles and wanderings in the fragrant fields and along the highways of her home village.

She knew every inch of the meadows where grew her favorite orchids; she had learned the haunts of the ladies' slipper, her favorite Indian pipes, and the gentle wood violet. Nor did she derive pleasure alone from the beautiful world about her. There was an old, old man — almost ninety — they said, who was her playmate and friend. A veteran of the War of 1812 and of the Mexican War, a staunch old Whig, with a touch of aristocracy and breeding about him that gave to his shining black beaver peculiar dignity in the eyes of a child.

Her best lessons were learned at his side, and when the winter came, he it was who drew her on her sled to the neighboring pond where, with a chair for support, he taught her to skate.

Auf Wiedersehen

It was not strange that reared as she was "in the open," she had not learned to concentrate like the city girl. Then, too, her little scattered community of hard-working, under-paid country people, who either toiled in the mills and factories in the neighboring town, or wrung a scanty subsistence from the soil, had never seen with her eyes or longed with her soul for the higher culture that makes life richer, — the life with books and pictures and music.

The city girl's childhood had been sheltered by love and nourished by kindness, but all the peace of the "open," with its ever-changing wonder of life, had never sunk deep into her heart. Like many others who have entered upon their journey of discovery and awakening abroad, both students had become restless and feverish with Ambition. A year passed. The city girl had already appeared as a virtuoso, and was anxious to renew her triumphs in America. The country girl was but half way up the hill, and just when her soul cried out for Knowledge, she found she must return to America.

Neither one had learned the joy of Service. Neither cried out in a nightly prayer for strength to carry a message of beauty into the material world. Their young lives were just opening, and mysterious voices, with manifold potentiality, whetted by Ambition, called them to a creative life. Though there were riches in their storehouse, they knew not how to use them. Because both were destined to live a life of devotion to Art, neither had developed the maternal instinct. It was but natural that the whole strength of their being should be absorbed in the passion for Knowledge. The passion for Service

Etudes of Life

could not be developed until sorrow, disappointment, the weight of years and the deepening of their spiritual natures, made it possible.

They longed for the intoxication of triumph in Art, the one equipped, the other only half-ready. Both had dreamed day and night of the splendor of Fame, when one could reach out the hand and touch the sky. And they knew no fear, because their hearts were clean, pure and honest.

On the deck, side by side, these two sat, and no one disturbed them. They were both writing. One had a music pad, the other a note book. At last the pianist spoke. "We will try it over by and by," she said. "It is a cradle song from my Land of Dreams. It just came to me as we left Hamburg. And yours?"

The girl at her side rose.

"We will go aft," she said, "and I will read it to you. I must look toward Berlin when I read. It is a poem about my life there. It seems so unfinished — that life, but something came into my mind, and I wrote it down. I am not sure that I, myself, understand it all."

They went aft where they could see the spires of Hamburg fading in the distance, and there they sat a long time before either spoke.

The poem was hardly a poem — crude at best — but it voiced Youth's longing, and it was spontaneous — one of those little gems of thought that seem to spring unawares from the depths of the human soul, to be laid away and forgotten because the technic of expression is so crude. And yet it always rings true, and because it is genuine, it is a classic to that life from which it springs.

Auf Wiedersehen

Years afterwards, when the girl who wrote it had found her place and learned the great lesson of Service, she took out the note book from an old-fashioned basket-trunk, on which were pasted many foreign labels, and read it, pondering deeply upon the strange fatality of human life; for, in the midst of her beautiful art-life, with wonderful gifts and the promise of still greater renown, her friend had died, the victim of a strange accident upon that very ocean which had fostered their friendship and deepened their potentiality. She read and re-read the poem, without sadness or sighing, for Death to her has no terrors, being only the opening of a richer Life.

Auf Wiedersehen, dear Land, toward Thee I've
looked
Since childhood's years, with yearnings fond and
vague,
Believing that between us lay a vast
Expanse of ocean, limitless and cold,
Akin to those long years of steady toil
There needs must be, ere from one's slender hoard
One draws the coins, and with horizon wide,
Peers into unknown, beauteous classic worlds.
This year with Thee, my own, my treasure Land,
Hath met the solemn yearning of my soul.
I looked upon the skill of painters great,
And oft, in galleries remote and calm,
I rested, while my eyes sought out the form
Of that Madonna that my nature craved;
Then back I hastened to my daily tasks,
Stifling a wish to peer into the life
About me, lest it might deter me from
My self-imposed seclusion with etudes.

Etudes of Life

Oh, rare and rich as Thou hast been to me,
I wonder if perchance Thou goest too
Into the dim and long-forgotten Past,
Linked as Thou art with all the joy of Life,
Ere Youth departs reluctant, with the head
Bowed to the sterner tasks and stronger mould
Of Womanhood, its features serious set,
And all the vigor of its youthful frame
Close-knit as with the sinews of restraint,
Of patience and of hope and peace with God.
I cannot think the Past doth not abide,
Since I have known and loved that perfect art
Of one to whom the classics are divine.
You know of whom I speak in words that fail;
'Twas in the labyrinth of strange new truths
Of bowing and of phrasing, grounded fast
Within his satellites — those loyal men
Who long with him had studied and communed,
That I myself became a worshipper
Of great Joachim's tone and wondrous skill;
Then, fever-mad, I played from morn till night,
With but a ray — a glimpse of Truth the while
My nature richer grew, and all my soul
Cried out for deeper Knowledge and for power
Outside of tricks of bow and Technic's skill.
To-day Thou'rt passing from my life, dear Land,
But something tells me that the vague pursuit
Of Art amid thy loved environment,
Hath fitted me for wider sympathy,
For readier service to my kith and kin,
For nobler living and for gentler deeds.
So do I go without one vain regret
For the bright coins I gave to Thee.
I count them but the means that God hath blessed

Auf Wiedersehen

By trailing friendships in my labor's wake.
Would that all people might this lesson learn :
That what is in your soul must sing aloud ;
It may not venture to the Hall of Fame,
Its voice may never move the passing throng ;
But what you add of culture to your Life,
Will broaden it and make it bear rich fruit
For Time and for that larger Cycle dim
Toward which with reverent mein we daily move,
With prayers upon our lips that we
May one day stand among the chosen few
That press about the shining form of Him
Who made us one with Him by precious blood.
Then shall we learn how He esteeméd us, ——
Yea, how He treasured us in His rich store.



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 988 820 4

